

conditional limitation from the claim. The claims are patentable because they all incorporate the limitations of claim 11 which has been found to be allowable by the Examiner.

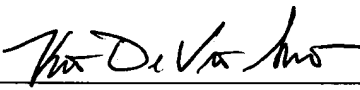
The amended claims were not presented earlier because it was only recently appreciated by Applicants and Applicant's representative that the invention could be more clearly described in the claims as proposed to be amended.

Applicants respectfully submit that the remarks above fully and clearly state why the amendment is needed, why the proposed amended and new claims require no additional search or examination, why the claims are patentable and why they were not presented earlier. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the amendment be entered under 37 C.F.R. § 1.312.

Respectfully submitted,

MERCHANT & GOULD P.C.
P.O. Box 2903
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402-0903
612.332.5300

Dated: 6-29-00


Katherine M. DeVries Smith
Reg. No. 42,157
KDS:PSTmar